8.

A LETTER TO Mr. Henry Stubs

CONCERNING
His Censure upon certain passages contained in the

HISTORY OF THE Royal Society.

LONDON,
Printed for *Octavian Pullen*, at the *Kings-Head* in *Little Britain*, 1670.

SIR,

WHEN I was (lately) at *Warwick*, I purpoſed to have waited upon you, but I was told by a Perſon of Quality and of your acquaintance that you were gone to *Oxford*, with a great carriage of Books, to write againſt the Royal Society, and the reaſon of this enterprize was given to your diſſwading Friends, that the Society did deſign to bring in *Popery*.

The acculation (I confeſs) ſeemed to me very ſtrange; but what was more wonderful, is ſuch mighty Zeal for *any one* Religion and againſt *That*. This calleth to my mind a diſcourſe which you made one day at *White-Hall* to a *Chriſt-Church* Man and my ſelf immediatly after your return from *Jamaica*, where you told us of a Provincial of the *Dominicans*, who being a Priſoner there had perſwaded

swaded you to go and live with him in the *Spanish* Plantations, as being a place, in which you might very gainfully practice Physick; and *Nothing*, as you said, hindred your complyance with his overtures, but only this, that you could not have carried away hereafter the Effects of your estate, but must have left it, if you had left the Country.

In all which account of the transactions betwixt that Provincial (who was of the *Inquisition*) and your self, you shewed so much gentle calmness of mind in the affair of changing Religion, that I was almost ready to have pronounced, that some one had stoln your Name and put it to the Censure, till I was better informed; that your quarrel to this Assembly is so unappeasable that you would fall out with any Religion, which they favoured, and that if they had of each kind amongst them, you would entertain no sort at all.

I must profess I always esteemed you (by your Printed Papers) a Man of excellent contradicting parts, and I thought you would in this book have done as good service to *Aristotle*, as a grave Dignitary of *Canterbury* hath lately rendred to him, when he very industriously maintains that the Phylosopher in his *Ethicks* did teach, what is the *summum bonum*, as well as *David* could, when he set himself on purpose to treat of the same Argument in the first *Psa.* or that you would have repeated some of the least natural experiments, laught at them, and then with very good conduct of stile made all the rest appear ridiculous. But you'l say that may be done hereafter, but a present *Religion*, *Religion* is in danger, and therefore you must succour

your

your *Dear Mother the Church of England.* It is done like a good child: and further I must commend you as a generous enemy in your censure of *Historian.* He is a Clergyman, and herein you challenge him at his own Weapon: And if you vanquish him in this Encounter, you may expect to make both your Reputation and his loss very considerable, being that in *England* a Church-man suffers more for being *Popishly* affected, then for being a favourer of the New Philosophy. But I'le tell you what falls out very unluckily.

This History was not Licensed (as could have been wisht) by the President of the Royal Society: For then a Man might have charged *every impious and pernicious Paragraph* upon that large body of Men, but to it is that it comes abroad into the World with an *Imprimatur* from Secretary *Morrice*, of whom we cannot perswade the people to believe otherwise, but that he stands two or three removes off from *Popery.* But now at last give me leave as a By-stander to look over your Game, and privately to advize you where the other side may espy any advantage. As to the first instance of a passage in the History Destructive to the Religion and Church of *England, viz.*

While the Bishops of Rome did assume an infallibility, and a Sovereign Dominion over our Faith; the reformed Churches did not only justly refuse to grant them that, but some of them thought themselves obliged to forbear all Communion, and would not give them that respect, which possibly might belong to so Antient, and so Famous a Church, and which might still have been allowed it without any danger of Superstition. If any one should undertake a defence against your censure it is

pro-

probable that he would say somewhat to this purpose that by communion there mentioned the Authour did not mean, that the reformed Churches should joyn with them in all or the most important acts of worship, being that hereby they must at all adventures yeild to the points of the controversie, which the Roman infallibility would thrust upon them, for he tells us that our Churches did justly refuse to grant them that, but he explains what he intends by communion, when he doth immediately add, that they refused to give them that respect, *&c.* Now who can say that Communion if taken for Divine Worship can be the same with respect that it shewed to a Society of Men, and whereas you seem to argue from the notion of the word Communion, as if it were the same with the Lords Supper, it may be replyed that the one sence, wherein it may be understood throughout the whole Scripture is, *a friendly and charitable action*, and from this we cannot except that verse, which you alleadge, and in this sence it is not *impious* to say that we should not forbear all Communion or deny to give that respect which possibly might belong to so antient and so famous a Church. Nor can I see that these Titles bestowed on *Rome* are so faulty, since there are methods of speech in our language, suitable hereunto, whereby we call that antient and famous, not which is so at present, but what was such a long time ago, and continued the same for a great while: But I will grant that this is not the necessary, but only the possible meaning of this Historian; Yet at least if the contrary intimation be so hainous, good Nature should obleige to understand the phrase in the most favourable man-

manner, but ſuppoſing he thought that *Rome* even at the reformation of others, (though it ſelf was not amended) might nevertheleſs be called a Church he ſaid no more then what the moſt learned amongſt the *German* Divines, though warm with diſputes, did readily acknowledge. It was uſual with them to ſay that the Church of *Rome* was truly a Church, notwithſtanding that it abounded in many and dangerous errours, ſeeing that they retained the main Doctrines of Chriſtian Religion, and they indeavoured to clear their aſſertion by comparing it to a diſeaſed body, which yet is as truly a humane body, as it is a diſeaſed one.

And if it may be termed a Church, it is without doubt very antient and famous too, for what it hath been of old as to the piety and learning of many Inhabitants of that City, and ſtill is Famous for that the precedency, which any Herauld would aſſign to it in a free Aſſembly of Weſtern Biſhops.

So that from what hath been diſcourſed in this matter may be inferred, that though the Authour meant not, that we muſt communicate with them in the diſtinguiſhing Offices of adoration, yet (for any thing I perceive) he needs not to account them of that Church to be unto us as Heathens, or of ſuch a Number of Men with whom we may not ſo much as eat, but that we may maintain a Communion of friendſhip with the profeſſed of that Religion, whoſe morals may afford an example or whoſe learning might advance our

knowledge. And the reformed must still keep the hearty Charity for the *Romanist*, that after successless debates, though managed with reason and temper, he should still indeavour to improve him in all the uncontroverted instances of goodness and vertue, such an exercise of Friendship and Charity as this is a Noble and Religious Communion, it is an exhorting one another in our most Holy Faith, it is an exact obedience to that command; *That as far as we have already attained we should walk by the same rule.*

As to the next exception which you have against the same passage, *viz.* His mistake in making the Papal Infallibility to be the grand occasion of the differences betwixt the reformed Religion and Papists, I must tell you that he may well enough defend himself, though indeed you press closer in this then in the former objection against all Communion with *Rome*. You say that only Parastical Canonists did ascribe to the *Pope* such a Sovereign Dominion over our Faith: I suppose you mean at the Reformation, though you cite many Authours much later, and if so I shall only refer you to the report, which *Cassander* gives of those days, in his Judgement which he passes on the controversies, *viz.* That then they made the *Pope* but little less then God, that they set his Authority not only above the Church, but above the Scripture too, and made his sentences equal to divine Oracles, and to be an *infallible rule of Faith*, and (as he further proceeds) though there

was

was another sort of people in the Church, yet they were such as were obscure and concealed.

Again though it were granted that infallibility lay in a Councel, yet the *Pope* had the executive power of those degrees and Cannons, which passed by so high an Authority, and hereupon might be troublesome with an Infallibility derived from others, and impose little things as absolutely necessary in their own nature, and this practice of the Bishops of *Rome* (amongst others) caused those of *Germany* to stand off from the Roman Church.

But for a fuller proof against the Authour of the History, you alleadge that erronious Doctrine about indulgences was the primary occasion of introducing Protestancy. What you say is so far true, the first occasion of *Luthers* publick invectives against the Court of *Rome*, but for a good while after he maintained Communion as a member of that Church. This is manifest to any one, that is but in a small measure acquainted with the Histories of those times, but at last when he saw there was no hopes of Reformation in this and other instances of gross abuses, he utterly leaves them as past all likelyhood of recovery.

So that I have now prepared the cause depending betwixt you and him, and made it ready for a Tryal, and it may be determined by finding out the true account of the Grand hinderance of a Reformation at *Rome*. Your adversary might give a very fair proof, that it

was mainly a reputed infallibility. This is evident in the impartial Hiſtory of the Councel of *Trent*, where we read of a conſultation held by *Pope Adrian 6* with ſome Cardinals for an amendment of what was amiſs, more particularly about the matter of Indulgences, after that much had been ſaid by himſelf and another againſt the miſtakes and ill practices in that affair, and after that he had declared his Reſolution for the regulating thereof, he was ſoon turned from his Former purpoſe by Cardinal *Soderinus* an old Politician; and one who well underſtood the Frame of that Church. This Man informs the *Pope* that any *Reformation was dangerous for Rome*, becauſe that this would implicitely *yeild that ſomewhat was amiſs*, and that poſſibly they might erre in more, whereas the ſucceſſes of *Rome*, againſt ſuch oppoſers were obtained by vouching for what ever was blamed and by proceeding againſt them as Hereticks.

This made *Adrian* to bewail the unhappy condition of *Popes*, who might not reform at home, if they would. And now at laſt you ſeem to make infallibility ſo ſmall a thing even in their own eſteem, that as you cite the words of a late writer amongſt them, their Infallibility is limited to Tradition and is ſpiritually aſſiſted in the Faithful reporting of what hath been delivered. It is eaſie to ſee thorough this harmleſs pretence of *your judicious Authour*.

For to be the ſole and undoubted witneſs in their own

own cauſe on which ſentence muſt follow in courſe is equally advantagious, as if they were taken for infallible judges. Thus the *Jews* who did ſo highly advance the credit o their Rabbinical traditions as thereby to make void the Law o' God, do not (as we ſee in) in *Abravanel*, own any more then only that they expound and ſhew the Articls of Faith, yet that *Jew*, who ſhall deſpiſe or jeer at the Teachers of thoſe traditions, ſhall not (according to their Fundmentalls) have a part in the life to come. And at the ſame rate may the Former ſort of men denounce *Anathema's* if you believe not their report, though in matters, which are not only, not certain, but withall are unreaſonable ridiculous and unpoſſible.

Another paſſage in the Hiſtory is brought in by you, and deeply charg'd to be *contrary to the Analogy of Faith and Scripture (to wit) He* (the Natural and Experimental Phyloſopher) *will be led to admire the wonderful contrivance of the Creation, and ſo to apply and direct his praiſes aright, which, no doubt, when they are offer'd up to Heaven from the mouth of one that hath well ſtudied what he commends will be more ſuitable to the Divine Nature, than the blind applauſes of the ignorant.* This (you ſay) makes the acceptableneſs of all mens *Prayers* to depend more or leſs on the ſtudy of naturalPhyloſophy. But theAuthors words may be aſſerted by the whole contexture of that Section, that he therein anſwers an objection, and clearly ſhews that the ſtudy of experimental Phyloſophy is not injurious to the worſhip of God, he ſuppoſeth the perſon already a Chriſtian, and then he praiſes God more heartily for ſome examples of power and wiſdom, which he by inquiry

quiry hath found out, but others have not, for when a man praiſeth God with underſtanding for what he diſcovers particularly in the wonderful works of Gods own hand, his praiſes muſt needs be more ſuitable on the ſame ſubject, then are thoſe general thankſgivings, wherein a man that hath not meditated on the works of Creation, bleſſes God ſtill for them, but cannot ſay how far theſe exceed the utmoſt productions of art, or the improved power of natural cauſes. Thus the commendation of any workmanſhip, if given by a great Maſter in that Art, is more ſatisfactory to the Artificer, then the admiring noiſe of the multitude, who probably may miſplace their greateſt wonder upon that which is the leaſt thing in it. And now (pray) what harm in all this, and yet the Author (as far as I can ſee) ſpeaks no worſer, but much very well, in the following clauſes, againſt Atheiſm. But, if I may ask you to what end do you change his words *Praiſes* into *Prayers*? was it, that you might prove (as you do) that Chriſt is our Mediator? he never did deny it.

But, methinks, this would be a pritty *Medium* to prove the not-ſuitableneſs of experimental Phyloſophy to a Chriſtian. You then proceed to make an apology for Ignorance, becauſe that of thoſe who were firſt called, there were not many wiſe after the fleſh. To which may be replyed, that this will avail little, if it be conſidered that by the phraſe, *wiſe after the fleſh*, is meant ſubtle and deſigning perſons, who by their politick managery of a cauſe though not good, might propagate and ſpread it for ſelf-ends, ſo that it ſhould find a general entertainment in the world. There was no ſuch thing as this in the firſt advance-

ment

ment of Christian Religion. But that the ignorance of the professors hereof was not acceptable to the Authour of our Faith, is manifest; for that he endowed his Scholars with the gift of tongues and such utterance, which their enemies were not able to resist. You add immediately after the Text, that it was intended of the *Virtuosi*, why so? Is it, because they are wise? I am confident you will not say that this is the reason. They have taken that course, that will scarce ever make them appear wise to the half-witted World, they are too timerous in what they affirm, they lay by much of that wordy Philosophy, which furnishes men with expressions hard to be understood and therefore is admirable, it makes a brave sound to the ear, nay more then all this, it supplies one with such useful distinctions that he may affirm plausibly whatsoever he will, but instead hereof they practice a plain Tradesman like Profession in Philosophy, instead of *aximes* and good old sayings concerning nature and matter and substantial Forms, which have salved a thousand difficulties Nothing will serve them for proof in Physicks, but experiments and somewhat that is obvious to the senses, they must have new Fashion'd *Telescopes* wherewith to gaze upon the Heavens, and Glasses invented to espy *Atomes*, and Furnaces for dissolution of bodies, and for other unheard of curiosities, and yet though they do dissolve the *compositum* into its constituting parts they would never yet reveal to the *Aristotelian* what kind of a thing their substantial Form is, which (they are well assured) is one principle in that body. Whereas (Sir) you have a nearer way to learning then that wherein they go on. You became an excel-

lent

lent Astronomer by reading a Cystme, of the *Ptolomæan Hypotheſis*, and have no reaſon to ſuſpect or ſearch further as long as you believe nothing about the Doctrine of the Sphere, but what you have learn'd from thoſe inſtitutions, you need not to pore with a microſcope upon thoſe minute figurings of bodies, thereby to gueſs how they produce ſuch & ſuch effects. You can anſwer any ordinary queſtion in nature, by the 4 firſt qualities & their ſeconds; by the conjugation & ſimbolica neſs of theſe qualities by natures abhorrency of a *vacuum*, by the keen Appetite, which the firſt matter (of which we know very much Negatively) bears towards a Form. Nay further, if any man ſhould demand a Reſolution of the greateſt problems, as of the Loadſtone or the like, you are not conſtrained to make ſuch a pittifull Reply, as many others muſt do, you can readily inform them, that it is either done by Familiarity of ſubſtances, which cauſes ſimilar attraction, or by a ſimpathy and the Loadſtone and the Iron do earn till they arrive at their mutual imbraces; but if any one be ſo much a Noveliſt, as to urge, that ſuch affections as theſe cannot be found, except there be in theſe bodies at leaſt a ſenſitive Life, you can bid them, then take this anſwer for your laſt, I ſay it is performed by an occult quality.

There is yet another piece of learning that is Chymiſtry, in which with a little adoe you can equal their attainments had through a long proceſs and tedious courſe. For the whole of what they pretend in this drudging Art, is no more then the ſolution and coagulation of bodies, by the firſt of theſe they with a great deal of coſt indeavour to ſeparate their three Elements, but you (Sir) more

cheaply

cheap he can ſhew you four Elements parting aſunder at the diſſolution of the mixt body. It is but laying of a green ſtick upon the other fuell already inflamed, immediately the Element of Air comes away in ſmoak, that of fire in the warm blaze, the Elementary water is that hiſſing juce at the end of the ſtick, and the Element of the earth is the remaining Aſhes, which if it be in the Grate will by its own inward propenſity (if it can) ſlide away down to the Hearth, becauſe the Hearth is nearer to the Center of the Earth then the Grate is; for it is well known that every weighty body hath a great affection to that Center. So that I think now you have out done them at this trick, and you will not be behind them at the other, to wit, Coagulation. They are pleaſed to ſay that they Coagulate a body when they bring it from a liquid or humid to a ſolid ſubſtance. This fine feat you ſo well underſtand and it is ſo much beneath you that you leave it to the Apothecaries boy, when you preſcribe troches for colds beſides Roſe-water and Sugar &c. to make this ſolid you appoint White-Starch *q. s.* and then refer it to the diſcretion of the lad to be made *S. a.* and here is ſo good a Coagulation that you never deſire to learn any other kind of it as long as you live, except it be the ſecret of making the hard Sea-biſket. No more at preſent of the compariſon betwixt your Phyloſophy and theirs. As I read on further in your cenſure I ſaw you were angry with this Authour, whom you have choſen for an Adverſary, becauſe he ſaith that *Religion ought not to be the ſubject of diſputation*, in the ſenſe wherein he ſpeaks it he is not ſingular, nor left almoſt

alone, he discourseth of those Divines, who have mixed and kneaded into one lump the Doctrines of Christian Religion, and the Notians of the Peripatetick Philosophy, and hereby have twined into a dispute much of that which primitively was matter of practical Holiness: yet on the other side there is a sort of men, who would less regard Religion, if it were not the subject of disputation, like Hunts-men who are better pleased in following them in catching the Hare, you further tax him with introducing hereby a Popish implicite faith, whereas a little observation will discover, that this sort of Faith hath grown, and a better hath decayed upon the general respect, which the Philosophy now blamed by him hath found amongst those, whom we call *Divines of the Schools*, more usually and properly then *Doctors of the Church*. A man doth then implicitely believe, when he doth not clearly and distinctly apprehend. So that he that speaks not so, as to be plainly understood causes either that nothing, which he saith should be believed, or else that it should be received as true in the Popish fashion, that is he bestows his vote and assent to be disposed on by another at pleasure. So that hence you may judge who it is, who draws on a novice in Religion, the nearest towards wrapping his belief up within the faith of another, whether he who contends for so much plainness, that the things propounded need not to be the subject of disputation, or rather he who seems profound and wise in his sentences, yet doth so darken his wisdome with words that the person to be instructed hath by this means no other way left but to believe that which he cannot understand; you pro-

duce

duce some sacred testimonnies to evince a necessity of divine illumination, yet do not apply them to the present discourse of the Authour, which is concerning School Divinity, but had you meant it of this I must have said with you that the obscurity of those writings would have made such a Revelation necessary, had not the smalness of their worth rendred them almost useless. It seems to me but reasonable, that as all Books of Christian Religion hope for acceptance, because they profess to be agreeable to the truths of Scripture. So further if they design publick benefit, they should imitate the perspicuity and openness of the Evangelick Style. There is one argument against the Authour not inconsiderable, to which you have some reference, (that is) the study of such controversies, distinctions and terms are of great use, when we have to deal with a Papist disputant. Its very true, yet it proves not any excellency in that knowledge of it self, but meerly in relation to the adversary; though we have fresh instances of worthy persons amongst us, who have with good advantage managed the debate in behalf of our Church against that of *Rome*, without much help from those Schools: yet that sort of Learning, even for this reason, may still be maintained, in the same manner as tradsmen who lie on the English borders towards *Wales* usually keep a servant to jabber Welsh (though no learned language) to the *Brittains* their customers. The next words of the History *R. S.* which receive a check are these, *The grounds whereon the Church of England proceeds, are different from those of the Separatists, and also of the Church of Rome: and they are no other but the rights of the*

Civil power; the imitation of the first uncorrupt Churches; and the Scriptures expounded by reason. Though I cannot find any such passage in the page to which you send the Reader, yet I will take it upon trust, seeing that you have not till now misrecited any thing out of his book, that which offends you is, that he would have the Scripture expounded by reason. This appears to you like Socinianisme, but I remember the Calvinists direct to as much as this implies. They say that we must expound particular passages in Scripture by the main tendency of the whole discourse, that we must consider the phrase, whether literal or figurative, that we must observe all the circumstances of person, time, place, and what else is of any moment. And now (pray) say whether these directions can be practised but by reason, and if not, whether he who expounds Scripture by these rules, may not be truly said to expound it by reason: he doth not say that a man should not acknowledge Scripture, if it teach any thing more then those sentiments which reason had entertained before it was acquainted with divine writings. You would have them to expound the Scriptures by the authority of the ancient Fathers, when they see why they should do it, they at the same time expound by reason, if without cause given they take up the Fathers sence in that implicite Faith against which you did lately declaim. The last Objection which you offer against this History, is about what he saith of wit, that may be borrowed from the Bible, that this wit is (as he represents it) magnificent, appears to the diligent and judicious Reader: and that it may without offence be borrowed is as manifest to him,

him, who gives himself the pleasure to peruse the Greek and Latine Divine Poems both antient and modern, which fetch their ornaments as well as materials from the Bible. But you'l say however Scripture-expressions ought not to be applyed (as our author would) to natural things. I see no reason which hinders, especially when natural things become the occasion of divine praises, and furthermore, whereas many Scripture-expressions were by way of accomodation transferred higher from things natural, they lose not their original surtableness, and when they are brought back and lower in our discourses, it may rather be said of them, that they are repaid then that they are borrowed; nor doth the meanest of the matter to which any saying is fitted out of Scripture, strightway make it unlawfull to be lent for a while; as for example the primitive *Ignatius* in one of his genuine Epistles, which was written (if I mistake not) to the *Tralliani* applies otherwise these words of our Saviour to his Disciples concerning those extraordinary assistanees which they needed to receive from him: *Without me ye can do nothing.* And affirms that as our Saviour spake these words to his Disciples, so a Bishop may say to his Presbyters, without me ye can do nothing. Yet I must profess that I am very sensible of the indignities and scorns which the sacred word of God suffers from a sort of persons. whose quality is better then their converse, they are such who are scarce ever guilty of wit or raillery, but when they are ingeniously prophane or blasphemous. The intemperance of these should lay an restraint upon the sober & discreet least by an innocent use of a little liberty, they should

unawares

unawars give any countenance to other mens extravigancies. You tell us upon this argument, how severe the *Jews* are in this case. The most that wee meet with neer this purpose concerning them discovers not so much a holy reverence, as a stupid folly. They pronounce (as in a former instance so in this) that no Jew shall have a part in the world to come, who shall spit out, when he names God, or shall speak the Tetragrammaton in a forreigne tongue out of the Sanctuary. There is one thing at the end of your censure which is very unkind, and contrary to the laws of common humanity I speake of your sharp reflexions on an excellent person deceased Mr. *Cowley*, these younger fancies ought not after death to become his reproach especially since he left a charge, that what was offensive in his Poems might be omitted: though it was judged by others, that he had written nothing, but what (with his own sober correction of himself, and an equitable allowance of charity) might well pass abroad in publique. You know that those who weeded out the worst of *Beza's* youthful verses, and presented them in one bundle to the world, purchased more shame to themselves then to the Poet. It is now time that I should put an end to this tedious Letter, and I must request that you would excuse my plain dealing; do not suspect that (upon some account of friendship or acquaintance) I am too inclinable to vindicate the Author of this History. I dare assure you I know him not otherwise then by face, and Printed books, one of which is against *Sorbier*, whom (though a peice of a Virtuoso) he handles very smartly, examining the condition of his life and actions. What apprehensions then might

might you have, leaſt if he ſhould happen to have nothing elſe to doe, he ſhould write the Hiſtory of your life, and herein (as is uſuall) deſcribe your perſon, and enquire into Phyſiognomy, what temper of mind you muſt profeſs, and give a Catalogue of Books written by you, and ſhew in how many preſs-wars you have ſerved as a volunteer. But now that I have done, I have time to think, what adeal of needleſs labour I have beſtowed to write, more then what you will have patience to read. I therefore take leave and am. Your &c,

FINIS.